

# Improving Educational and Vocational Outcomes for Incarcerated Youth in Iowa

**Nina Salomon, Senior Policy Analyst, Juvenile Justice  
Council of State Governments Justice Center**

# Conducted First-of-its-Kind National Survey

- Survey disseminated to all 50 states
- Asked 3 main questions:
  - **What services are provided?**
  - **What outcomes are collected?**
  - **What supports are provided for transitions?**
- Findings, recommendations, and examples

November 2015

## LOCKED OUT: Improving Educational and Vocational Outcomes for Incarcerated Youth

### INTRODUCTION

**P**olicymakers across the political spectrum agree: all young people should have access to a high-quality public education. Within the past two decades, particular emphasis has been placed on ensuring that students receive instruction that prepares them for college and careers, and that schools are held accountable for realizing these goals.<sup>1</sup>

There is perhaps no subset of young people whose need for a quality education is more acute—and whose situation makes them especially challenging to serve—than incarcerated youth. Of the more than 60,000 youth who are incarcerated on any given day in the United States, nearly 36,000 are committed to state custody,<sup>2</sup> two-thirds of whom are youth of color. The majority of these youth are over-age and under-credited,<sup>3</sup> several grade levels behind their peers,<sup>4</sup> more likely to have a disability than their peers,<sup>5</sup> and have been suspended multiple times and/or expelled from their local schools.<sup>6</sup>

In 1997, the majority of incarcerated youth were housed in state-run facilities; as of 2013, almost two-thirds of incarcerated youth were held in privately or locally run facilities. (See Figure 1) In most states, an array of state and local agencies and nonprofit and private organizations are responsible for overseeing and delivering educational and vocational services to incarcerated youth. As the proportion of youth incarcerated in privately or locally run facilities has grown, this has evolved into an increasingly complicated patchwork of government and nongovernment agencies. This shift means that any combination of state, local, nonprofit, and private entities now manage educational and vocational services for incarcerated youth. (See Figure 2)

### Who are Incarcerated Youth?

Of the more than 60,000 youth incarcerated on a given day:

- Approximately 36,000 youth are committed to the custody of the state juvenile correctional agency as part of a court disposition<sup>7</sup> and are typically incarcerated for 3 to 12 months. These youth can be placed in a facility run by the state, a range of nonprofit and for-profit organizations, or a local juvenile justice agency. These facilities include secure facilities as well as a range of non-secure facilities, such as residential treatment centers or group homes.

- Approximately 18,000 youth are incarcerated in primarily locally run detention facilities,<sup>8</sup> typically for fewer than 60 days, and most often because they are awaiting a court disposition.

- Nearly 6,000 youth are incarcerated in adult prisons and jails.<sup>9</sup>

### Education Data on Incarcerated Youth

National educational data on incarcerated youth is limited. Studies that have been conducted show:<sup>10</sup>

- At least one in three incarcerated youth is identified as needing or already receiving special education services—a rate nearly four times higher than youth attending school in the community.

- More than half of incarcerated youth have reading and math skills significantly below their grade level and approximately 60 percent have repeated a grade.

- The majority of incarcerated youth were suspended and/or expelled from school, and many had dropped out of school all together before being incarcerated.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See "Easy Access to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement," <http://www.dhs.gov/ohr/ohr/cjrp/>.

<sup>2</sup> An "over-age and under-credited" student is defined as one who is over the traditional school age for his or her grade level and lacks adequate credit hours for his or her grade level.

<sup>3</sup> Disposition is a phase of a delinquency proceeding similar to the "sentencing" phase of an adult trial.

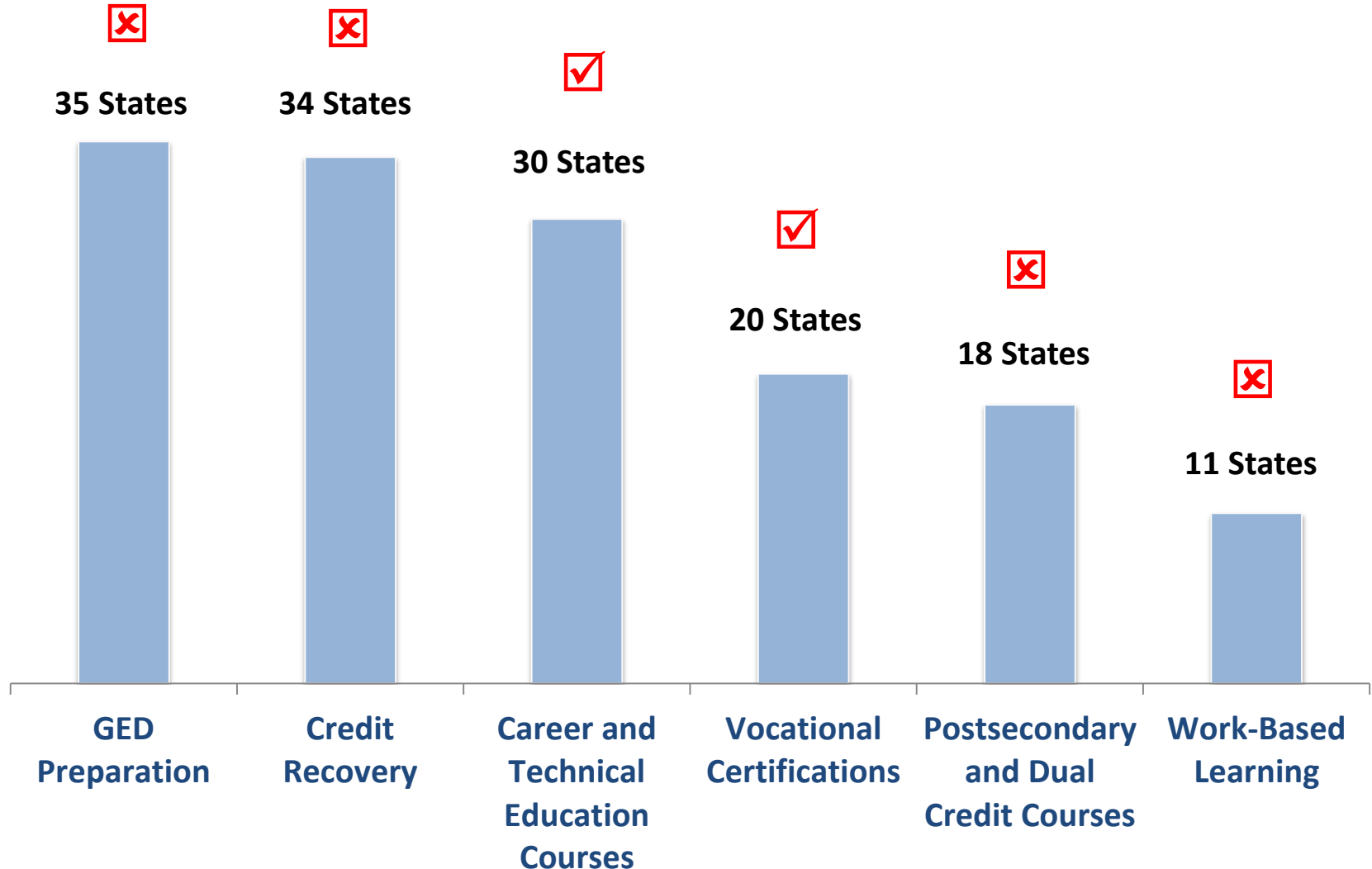
<sup>4</sup> Detention facilities provide short-term, temporary care in a clinically restrictive environment for youth who are in custody pending court disposition, as well as for youth who have

## Key Finding #1



**Most incarcerated youth do not have access to the same educational and vocational services as their peers in the community, and they do not attend schools that have the same rigorous curriculum and student performance standards as traditional public schools.**

# Only 8 states provide access to the same educational and vocational services to ALL kids



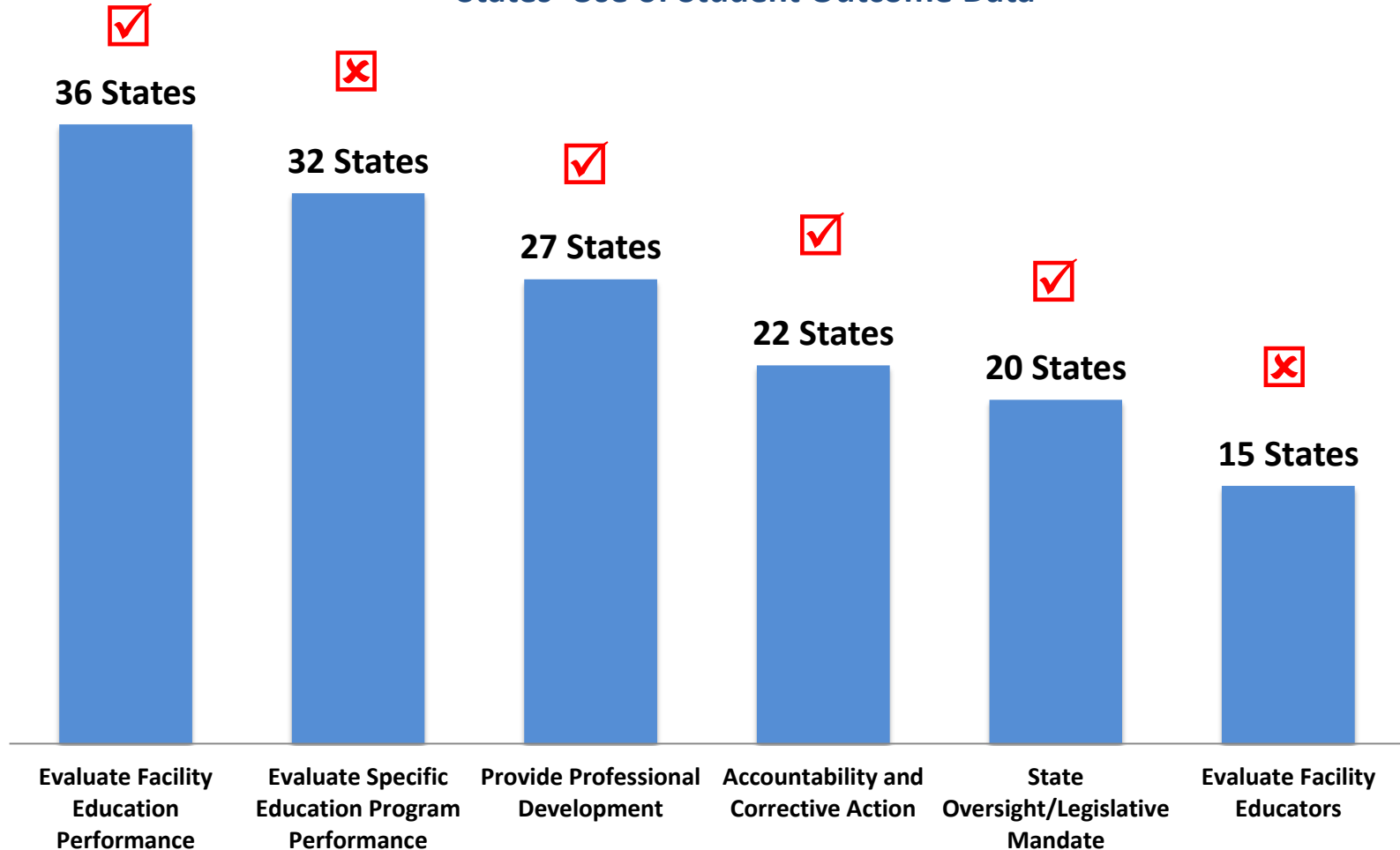
## Key Finding #2



**Most states do not collect, track, and report student outcome data for incarcerated youth in all facility schools.**

# States are not analyzing and using outcome data to hold schools and staff accountable

States' Use of Student Outcome Data



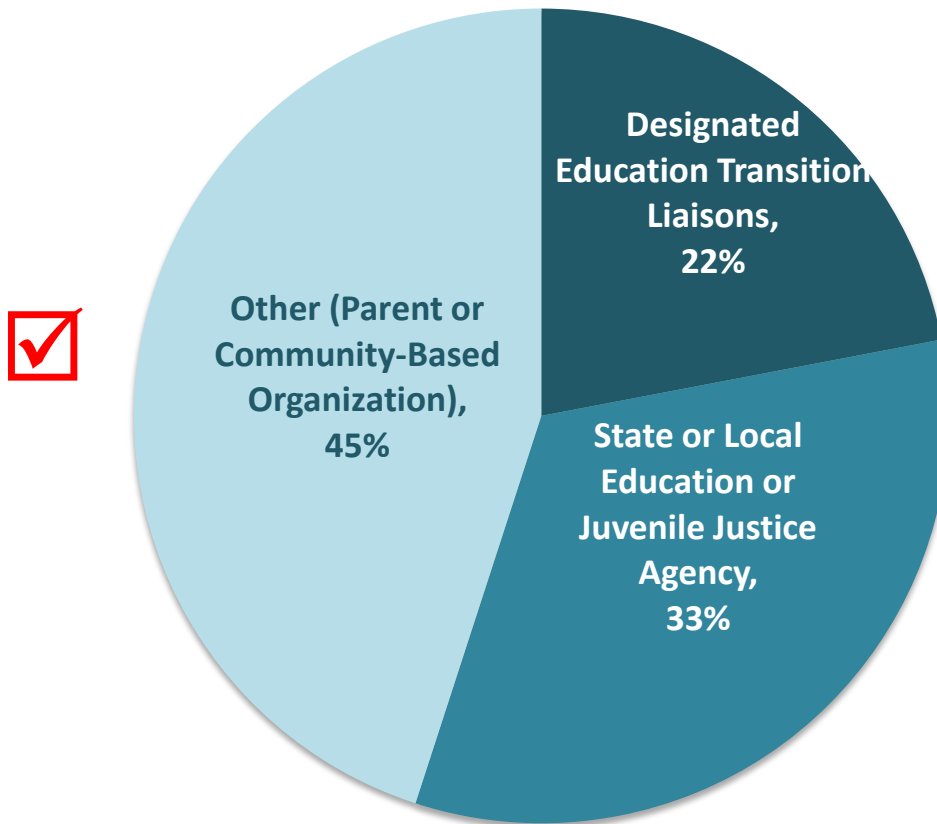
## Key Finding #3



**Policies and practices employed in most states make it especially challenging for youth released from incarceration to make an effective transition to community-based educational or vocational services.**

In nearly half of the states, no government agency is responsible for ensuring that incarcerated youth transition successfully to an educational or vocational setting

### Entity Primarily Responsible for Education Transitions for Incarcerated Youth

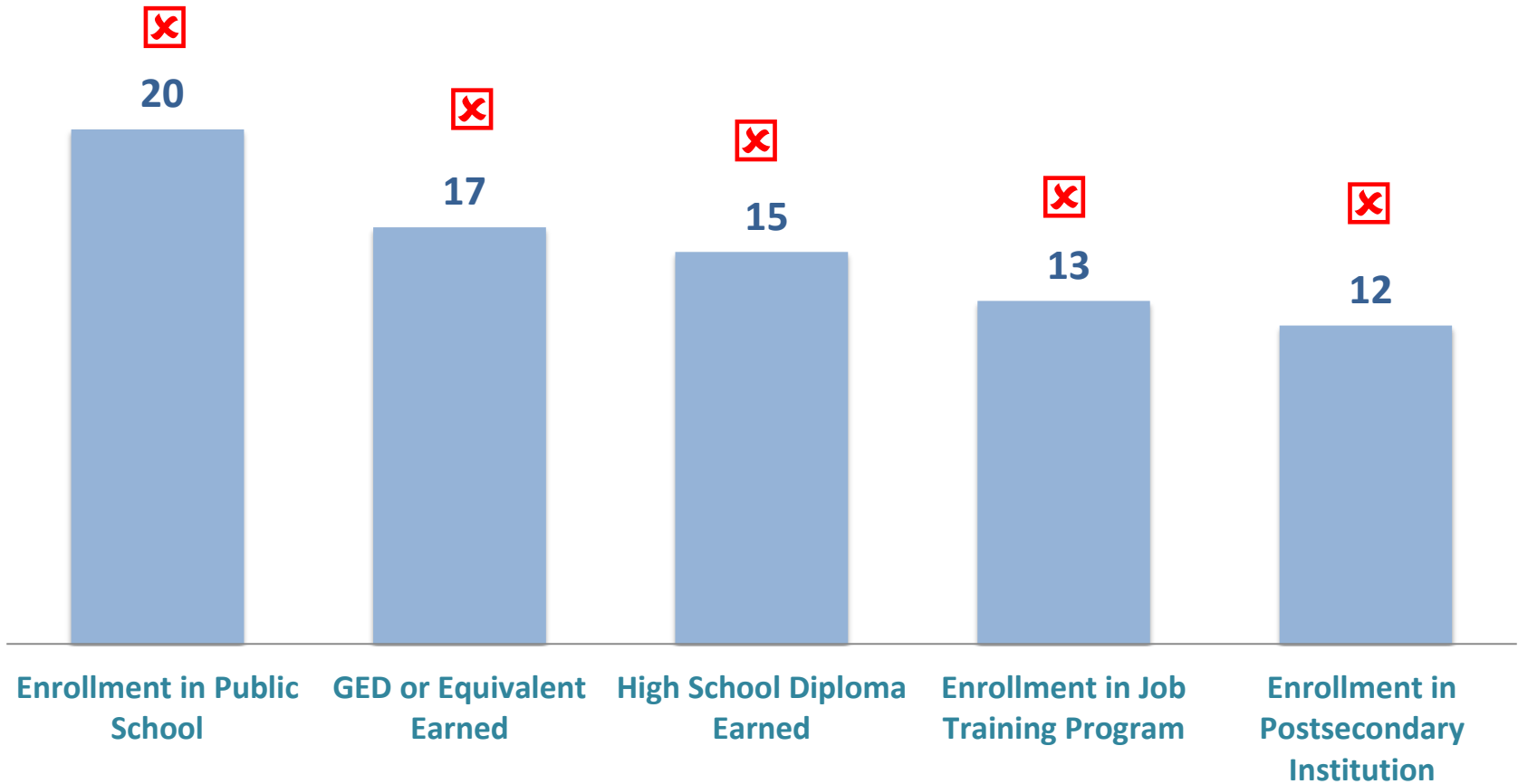


In Iowa, most school-age youth upon release are enrolled into an alternative education program for students with behavioral health challenges



# Most states do not track whether youth released from incarceration subsequently enroll in public school, graduate from high school, and/or enroll in a job training program

States' Collection of Student Outcome Data For Youth Post Release



# US Departments of Education and Justice's Correctional Education Guidance Package

- The package includes the following components:
  - **Guiding Principles** for Providing High-Quality Education in Juvenile Justice Secure Care Settings, jointly issued by DOJ and ED.
  - **Dear Colleague Letter on Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** for Students with Disabilities in Correctional Facilities, issued by ED's Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services.
  - **Dear Colleague Letter on Civil Rights** of Students in Juvenile Justice Residential Facilities, issued by DOJ's Civil Rights Division and ED's Office for Civil Rights.
  - **Dear Colleague Letter on Access to Federal Pell Grants** for Students in Juvenile Justice Residential Facilities, issued by ED's Office of Postsecondary Education, provides campus financial aid professionals eligibility requirements for youth residing in juvenile justice facilities to apply for Pell Grants.



# Effective Practices in Transition

National Dropout Re-engagement Convening  
Juvenile Justice Education Re-engagement  
March 16, 2016

Simon Gonsoulin, Project Director  
National Technical Assistance Center for the Education of Neglected and Delinquent  
Children and Youth  
American Institutes for Research



**The National Technical Assistance Center**  
for the Education of Neglected or Delinquent  
Children and Youth (NDTAC)



[www.neglected-delinquent.org](http://www.neglected-delinquent.org)

# What is transition?

## A set of activities that are:

- Coordinated
- Supportive
- Outcome-focused
- Present across multiple systems

# Stages of Transition

**Stage 1:** Entry into the justice system

**Stage 2:** Residence

**Stage 3:** Exit from incarceration

# Effective Transition Efforts

- Transition planning at first contact;
- High levels of engagement with youth in the development of plans that include family, agency, and school members;
- Supports, services, and processes that are culturally and linguistically competent and well-monitored;
- Well-trained staff who are sufficiently funded;
- A dedicated transition coordinator who oversees the process.

# What Title One, Part D Has To Say On Transition

- **Part D:** Also called The Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk; it includes two programs under which juvenile justice transition services are relevant, as described below:
- **Subpart 1** (State agency [SA] program) requires an SA grantee to reserve 15-30 percent of its subgrant for transition services ([ESEA, section 1418](#)). All facilities served under Subpart 1 must designate a transition coordinator ([ESEA, section 1414\(c\)\(11\)](#)).

# What Title One, Part D Has To Say On Transition

- Under **Subpart 2** (local educational agency [LEA] program), subgrantees should support transition assistance for youth enrolled in LEAs and youth served in locally operated juvenile correctional facilities within their boundaries (Part D Nonregulatory Guidance, section [P-1](#)). Additionally, dropout prevention services must be provided by LEAs in districts in which at least 30 percent of youth will reenter a school within the LEA boundary (Part D Nonregulatory Guidance, section [O-1](#)).
- **Part A:** Allows LEAs the option to reserve additional funds, beyond those needed to provide comparable services, to support a transition coordinator, as long as costs are consistent with applicable cost principles.



# Who Has Transition

## Coordinators

- **Indiana:** Funds transition coordinators at each facility (works directly with facility-based teachers) and has access to State Information Management System past, current and future information
  - To learn more, contact: Susan Lockwood, Director of Juvenile Education, Indiana Department of Correction Division of Youth Services ([SLockwood@idoc.IN.gov](mailto:SLockwood@idoc.IN.gov))
- **Michigan – Ingham County Youth Center:** Funds a transition coordinator to develop individualized transition plans with an emphasis on relationships surrounding the student (e.g., family, school counselor, school officer) and to support the collection of after-exit data
  - To learn more, contact: Irma Arellano, Grant Coordinator, Ingham County Youth Center, Lansing ([IArellano@ingham.org](mailto:IArellano@ingham.org))

# Who Has Transition

## Coordinators

- **Ohio – Buckeye United School District:** Works closely with parole officers to support youth during transition and to collect after-exit data
  - To learn more, contact: Jennifer Sanders, Superintendent, Buckeye United School District, Columbus ([Jennifer.Sanders@dys.ohio.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Sanders@dys.ohio.gov))
- **Ohio – Dayton City Schools:** Funds a transition coordinator to develop transition plans in collaboration with facility school staff and meets with students regularly during stay and after release
  - To learn more, contact: Karl Koenig, State Part D Coordinator ([karl.koenig@education.ohio.gov](mailto:karl.koenig@education.ohio.gov)) – he can connect you with the LEA

# Who Has Transition

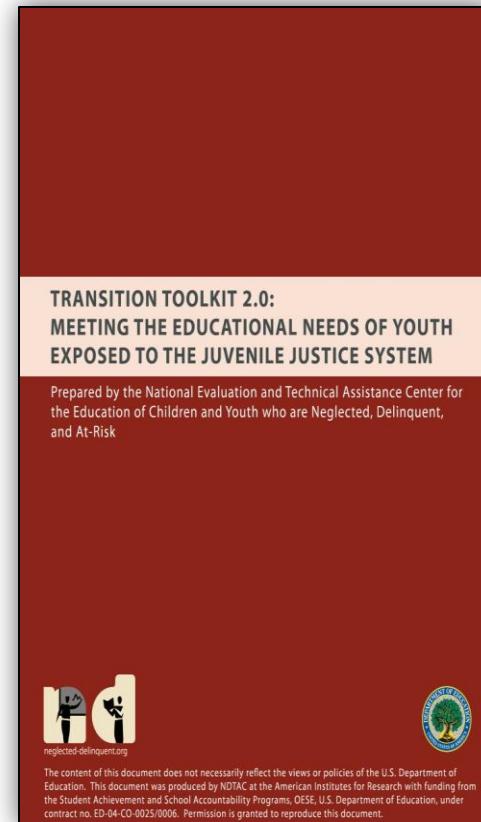
## Coordinators

- **Nebraska:** Transition Coordinators work directly with families and school districts on transitional concerns; build rapport with community agencies (probation) and families; provides a layer of support for youth and families when they go to court and school; acts as catalyst for information sharing between schools, community and parents.
  - To learn more, contact: Pat Frost, State Part D Coordinator;  
[Pat.Frost@nebraska.gov](mailto:Pat.Frost@nebraska.gov)
- **Washington:** Developed an Education Advocate Program that utilizes a reentry case management model ([http://www.k12.wa.us/InstitutionalEd/pubdocs/EA\\_Manual.pdf?\\_sm\\_au\\_=iVVDsMtN7Kn8jRfP](http://www.k12.wa.us/InstitutionalEd/pubdocs/EA_Manual.pdf?_sm_au_=iVVDsMtN7Kn8jRfP)) to assist youth during reentry from secure facilities
  - To learn more, contact: Kathleen Sande, State Part D Coordinator ([kathleen.sande@k12.wa.us](mailto:kathleen.sande@k12.wa.us))

# NDTAC's Transition Toolkit 2.0

The second edition of NDTAC's Transition Toolkit brings together strategies, existing practices, and updated resources and documents on transition to enable administrators and service providers to provide high-quality transition services for children and youth moving into, through, and out of education programs within the juvenile justice system.

<http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/resource/transition-toolkit-20-meeting-educational-needs-youth-exposed-juvenile->



# **Key Components and Impact of Education Advocates In Washington State**

Iowa Juvenile Justice-Education Transitions  
Exploratory Convening  
March 16, 2016



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Laurie Shannon, OSPI Juvenile Justice Education ,  
WA Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Jill Patnode, Puget Sound ESD

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## **Title I Neglected-Delinquent (Title I D) Funding (supplements basic ed)**

- ✘ Subpart 1 Title I D funding provides **academic improvement** inside state long-term facilities
- ✘ Subpart 2 Title I D funding provides **transition and dropout interventions** inside & outside local short-term detention centers
- ✘ 2014 annual count generated \$4.3 million for school year 2015-16



# Collaboration

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- ✘ 9 Educational Service Districts across WA
  - + Local Needs Assessments
  - + Select Target group to serve
  - + Develop referral criteria
  - + Determine how to integrate with other programs
- ✘ Hire Education Advocates to:
  - + Assist youth leaving facilities
  - + Coordinate with schools & families
- ✘ Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR) long-term facility staff
  - + Transition coordinators
  - + Facility counselors
  - + School staff

# Education Advocates ... USING MULTI-TIERS OF SUPPORT & CASE MANAGEMENT

## PROVIDE 1-1 SERVICES

- ✖ **Assess** with a strength-based instrument
- ✖ **Develop** a student-driven success plan
- ✖ **Refer to** community services (social health, drug, alcohol)
- ✖ **Monitor** attendance
- ✖ **Tutor**, GED testing
- ✖ Career **coaching**, Academic **Testing**
- ✖ **Mentoring**

## ASSIST YOUTH TO

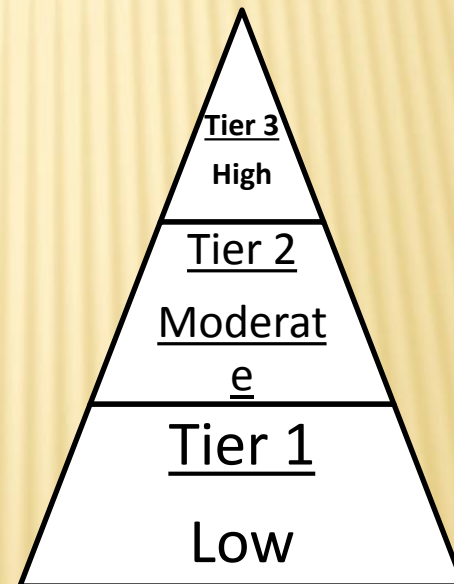
- ✖ Overcome barriers
- ✖ Stay in school
- ✖ Connect to vocation/careers
- ✖ Improve attendance
- ✖ Improve school coordination
- ✖ Re-engage in school
- ✖ Engage with their community
- ✖ Locate viable employment



# Multi-tiers of Support

Advocacy, support and guidance to youth:

- ✦ High need = Daily monitoring & support, contact with youth and an adult support, monitor attendance, grades, peer involvement
- ✦ Moderate need = Weekly or bi-weekly monitoring and support, contact with youth and adult
- ✦ Low need = Monthly or quarterly contact and support to maintain good practices



# CHALLENGES

- ✗ Schools denying entry
  - ✗ Families/youth not understanding the school “system”
    - + Enrollment procedures/requirements vary.
    - + Credits/course work not transferring.
  - ✗ Lack of support systems in schools and communities
    - + Generation gangs, poverty, homelessness, addictions, mental illness, & learning disabilities, grief and trauma.
    - + Parental/Family support.
- Collecting data after release

# ADDRESSING CHALLENGES

- ✖ Help youth navigate the system.
- ✖ Collaborate with others in the system.
- ✖ Communicate and network with:
  - + Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice
  - + Local Community Agencies and others
- ✖ Educate youth about their options.
- ✖ Help youth advocate for themselves.
- ✖ Utilize Advocates in the schools to collect data

# Juvenile Justice-Education Transitions



Dubuque, Iowa

March 16, 2016

Kate Burdick, Juvenile Law Center  
Legal Center for Youth Justice and Education

# About Us

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## Juvenile Law Center - [www.jlc.org](http://www.jlc.org)

### **Legal Center for Youth Justice and Education:**

National collaboration of Southern Poverty Law Center, Juvenile Law Center, Education Law Center-PA, and the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law. Our mission is to ensure that all children in the juvenile and criminal justice systems can access their right to a quality education.



# Reentry Struggles

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- ❑ **Over 2/3 of students drop out of school after release from juvenile justice system**
- ❑ “Despite all of my struggles, I got good grades in placement. But when I came home, I was not able to transfer my credits from placement so I had to enroll in GED classes.”
- ❑ “When I left a juvenile justice facility and returned home, I was only one credit away from graduating...Unfortunately...my public school said that they would not accept my credits and that I would have to go back to 9<sup>th</sup> grade or take GED classes.”
- ❑ “After I left my placement, I tried to re-enroll in my community school, but was told that I would be denied entry because I had been ‘truant.’”

# Pennsylvania Academic & Career/Technical Training Alliance (PACTT)

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- ❑ Affiliate driven
- ❑ CTE and academics integrated
- ❑ Literacy improvement strategies
- ❑ Academic curricula aligned w/ state standards
- ❑ Credit recovery & post-secondary options
- ❑ CTE aligned w/ industry standards
- ❑ Employability and Soft Skills
- ❑ Basic and/or entry level certifications
- ❑ Portfolios
- ❑ Smooth transitions home
- ❑ Data collection

# Other examples

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- ❑ PA pending legislation – points of contact, credit transfer and recovery
- ❑ NYC– electronic records, 2 day re-enrollment, credit equivalency chart
- ❑ VA – reentry planning, re-enrollment, counseling
- ❑ ME – reintegration team
- ❑ FL – home district involvement and credit recognition
- ❑ CA – credit recognition, re-enrollment, MOUs
- ❑ WV – multidisciplinary aftercare plan
- ❑ New Title I, D language in ESSA



# Contact Information

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Kate Burdick

Staff Attorney

Juvenile Law Center

1315 Walnut Street, Suite 400

Philadelphia, PA 19107-4798

(215) 625-0551

[kburdick@jlc.org](mailto:kburdick@jlc.org)

[www.jlc.org](http://www.jlc.org)